

Yet, like liberty, the price of environmental protection is eternal vigilance. The individuals and organizations who are fighting to protect these magnificent forests have embraced the dream of President Clinton and millions of people across this country. They will not stand aside while the fight for America the Beautiful is in the balance. From the time of Teddy Roosevelt, leaders have stepped forward to ensure that future generations will inherit an epic legacy of timeless beauty.

In this initiative, as in others, President Clinton operated on the principle that economic progress and environmental protection can and must go hand in hand. He made this point clearly in a speech at Reddish Knob in the George Washington National Forest where he called on the Forest Service to formulate a policy to preserve the roadless areas: "It is no longer necessary to grow a modern economy by destroying natural resources and putting more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. In fact, we can create more jobs by following a path of sustainable development."

President Clinton realized that the country was changing. People were attracted to pristine environments where they saw opportunities for outdoor recreation. Whether it be hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, wildlife photography, or other forms of outdoor activities, people are increasingly seeking out places where they can find solitude, enjoy the wonder and contentment found in nature, and in their own individual way, experience a renewal of the human spirit. To accommodate these popular activities, companies are finding an ever growing and powerful market, giving a helpful hand to local economic interests.

While standing up for the public good is always the right thing to do, it is rarely the easy thing to do. Despite the fact that President Clinton's executive action was steeped in precedent, pioneered by Theodore Roosevelt and other presidents throughout the 20th century, his action was immediately challenged in lawsuits that have spanned the last decade. Some of the opposition may have arisen from the mistaken belief that the Roadless Rule was a last minute action in the final days of the Clinton Administration. In truth, the final adoption of the Rule was the culmination of an exhaustive rule-making procedure, including a thorough and well reasoned environmental impact statement.

As early as December of 1997, one hundred and sixty nine scientists wrote to President Clinton urging him to develop a science based policy for roadless area protection. The public response was enormous. The forest protection idea sparked the largest grassroots environmental campaign in US history, eliciting an unprecedented one million six hundred thousand comments from the public. More than 1.2 million Americans provided comments over a 60 day period alone. Of those comments, an amazing 96% of the citizens voiced support for protecting these irreplaceable natural treasures.

Other opposition wrongly assumed that these forests were crucial to the viability of the logging industry. Yet here again, the truth was that these roadless regions accounted for a very small percentage of the logging industry, while the cost of extraction meant that any effort to log in these areas would have to be subsidized.

These old forests are important to people who do not directly use the forests. Scientists have accelerated their documentation of the massive value of free ecological services that are derived from forests. These services help to clean our drinking water, prevent soil erosion, clear the air of pollution, and sequester carbon that otherwise would contribute to climate change.

The old dichotomy between preservationists and utilitarians is increasingly becoming blurred due to the ubiquitous use of these free ecological services. It turns out that everybody has a stake in these ancient forests, because the magnificent landscapes are essential to the integrity of the great life support systems of the planet.

Although forests are under the control of sovereign nations, they also represent a trust responsibility to the world. Deforestation, for example, is one of the biggest contributors to adverse climate change. Forests soak up prodigious amounts of carbon dioxide. Therefore, every person on the earth and all future generations are affected by every forest on earth, regardless of which country they call home.

The eminent historian, Dr. Douglas Brinkley, observed in his book, *The Wilderness Warrior*, that Theodore Roosevelt's conservation record became "the template future presidents followed." His historical perspective rings true.

President Clinton, shortly before he left office, reflected on the environmental policies of his Administration: "We had done our best to be faithful to Roosevelt's conservation ethic and to his admonition that we should always be taking what he called 'the long view . . . Working together, we can ensure that not only our generation, but each generation to come, will have the resources to leave an even better land for those who follow.'"

President Clinton's leadership by example, practicing at home what he advocates abroad, adds to our credibility in the international community and gives hope to people everywhere that living up to our global responsibilities does not impede, but rather sustains economic opportunity and vitality.

Saving the beauty, diversity, and life of the planet is not bad economics; rather, it is fundamental to human survival and the advance of civilization.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF POPE SHENOUDA III

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 19, 2012

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the passing and celebrate the life of Coptic Christian Pope Shenouda III of Alexandria. For more than forty years, Pope Shenouda was the leader of the Coptic Orthodox Church—a denomination with more than ten million followers in Egypt and throughout the world.

As its religious leader, he ensured that the Egyptian Coptic community was, and is, an integral pillar of Egyptian society. We will miss him, especially during this time of political transition in Egypt, as his voice reminded us of that country's long history of peace and religious tolerance.

I join the members of Michigan's Coptic Community and the St. Mark Coptic Orthodox Church in my district to mourn the passing of Pope Shenouda. As President Barack Obama eloquently stated "we will remember Pope Shenouda III as a man of deep faith, a leader of a great faith, and an advocate for unity and reconciliation."

RECOGNIZING WYNNBROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 19, 2012

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Wynnbrook Elementary, a school in my district that exemplifies all that is right with America's public education system. Under the guidance of Principal Jeffrey Pegg and his talented faculty, Wynnbrook has been rated an "A" school by the State of Florida nine years in a row.

I toured this fine school on March 15, 2012 and saw for myself everything that makes it great. I met wonderful teachers and spoke to classroom after classroom of happy children who were clearly excited to learn.

Wynnbrook Elementary's students are overwhelmingly minority children, and most come from low-income families. Despite these challenges, writing scores on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) are in the 90th percentile, with reading scores close behind. Scores in nearly all core subjects are over 80 percent as well.

There is no lack of enthusiasm at Wynnbrook. Several teachers were eager to tell me how pleased they are with the continued excellence of Wynnbrook. They are certainly a large part of its success, with several having taught at Wynnbrook for over 30 years. Additionally, the children were eager to ask me questions about my occupation and career. I was especially impressed with the number of students who told me they would like to become doctors or lawyers.

Wynnbrook is proof that when schools get the funding they need, they will turn out intelligent, well-adjusted children who want to succeed in life. What I saw that day served as a reminder of the importance of Title I funding in ensuring that our nation's students receive the education they deserve, regardless of their financial background, and reinforced my determination to work for increased funding for public education as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Principal Pegg, reading instructor Leslie Millar, and all the fine teachers and staff members I met at Wynnbrook Elementary, and I look forward to even greater success from its administrators, faculty, and students in the years to come.

CELEBRATING STATE REPRESENTATIVE CHET DOBIS'S RETIREMENT

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 19, 2012

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with immense gratitude and the utmost respect that I take this time to honor a dear friend and one of Indiana's finest citizens, the Honorable Chet Dobis, Indiana State Representative. For his many years of public service and his countless efforts toward improving the lives of Northwest Indiana residents, Chet will be honored at a celebratory reception at Gamba's Ristorante in Merrillville, Indiana, on Monday, March 19, 2012.